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Message Text

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P 282138Z MAR 74
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY
AMCONSUL ZAGREB
AMCONSUL TRIESTE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 062584

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, MARR, IT, YO
SUBJECT: US SHIP VISITS TO TRIESTE FOLLOWING
US-ITALIAN AMPHIBIOUS EXERCISE

REF: BELGRADE 1365

1. BEGIN FYI. FIVE SHIPS OF US SIXTH FLEET ARE TO CALL
AT TRIESTE AT CONCLUSION OF THEIR PARTICIPATION IN DARK
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IMAGE EXERCISE. TWO AMPHIBIOUS SHIPS, CARRYING TOTAL

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OF APPROXIMATELY 600-700 MARINES AND ONE GASOLINE TANKER (AOG) WILL VISIT TRIESTE APRIL 6-17, AND ONE REPAIR SHIP (AGP) AND ONE PATROL GUNBOAT (PG) WILL VISIT APRIL 4-9. END FYI.

2. UNLESS EMBASSY PERCEIVES OBJECTION, YOU SHOULD INFORM FSFA AT APPROPRIATE LEVEL AND IN ROUTINE MANNER THAT SEVERAL US SHIPS, SOME WITH MARINES ABOARD, WILL, IN ACCORDANCE WITH LONG-STANDING PLANS, MAKE REST AND RECREATION VISIT TRIESTE AFTER PARTICIPATING IN LONG-PLANNED NATO EXERCISE (OF WHICH GOY APPRISED BY ITALIANS) IN NORTH ADRIATIC AND NORTH EAST ITALY. THE SEAMEN AND MARINES ABOARD THESE SHIPS WILL TAKE SHORE LEAVE IN TRIESTE, SOME FOR AS LONG AS TEN DAYS. EMBASSY SHOULD STRESS ROUTINE NATURE OF VISITS (US UNITS HAVE VISITED TRIESTE MANY TIMES IN PAST).

3. IN UNLIKELY EVENT GOY SHOULD IMPLY A POSSIBLE CONNECTION BETWEEN SHIP VISITS AND CURRENT TRIESTE ZONE B DISPUTE, EMBASSY SHOULD INDICATE THAT VISITS ARE NOT RPT NOT INTENDED TO CARRY ANY SIGNAL. EMBASSY COULD ALSO OBSERVE THAT TWO SHIPS FROM SIXTH FLEET (USS DAVIS AND DONALD B. BEARY) MADE NORMAL VISITS DUBROVNIK FROM MARCH 25-29 AND FORMAL REQUEST FOR MAY VISIT OF USS LITTLE ROCK TO SPLIT HAS BEEN SUBMITTED.

4. EMBASSY ROME REPORTS THAT SITUATION IN TRIESTE IS CALM AND AS NORMAL AS POSSIBLE. ALTHOUGH THERE HAVE BEEN SOME POLEMICS IN TRIESTE NEWSPAPERS, BOTH ITALIAN RIGHTISTS AND SLOVENES WHO SUPPORT YUGOSLAV POSITION ARE BEHAVING IN A RESTRAINED MANNER. BORDER CROSSINGS CONTINUE NORMALLY, BUT YUGOSLAVS ARE CHECKING EVERY VEHICLE CAREFULLY.

5. FOR ROME: WHEN INFORMED THAT EMB BELGRADE HAS SPOKEN WITH YUGOSLAVS, EMBASSY REQUESTED TO INFORM MFA WE ARE TELLING GOY ABOVE AND STRESS TO GOI THAT TRIESTE SHORE LEAVE PLANNED LONG IN ADVANCE OF CURRENT SITUATION.

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